

REMARKS

The application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated February 27, 2004. Claims 1-50 are pending, with claims 1-3, 34-36, 43-45, 49 and 50 being in independent form. The Office Action states that claims 43-50 have been allowed. By this Amendment, Applicant has amended claims 5, 6, 8-12, 28-33, 38, 39, 41 and 42, by rewriting the claims in independent form. Applicant submits that no new matter is introduced by the claim amendments.

Claims 5, 6, 8-15, 22-33, 38, 39, 41 and 42 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but according to the Office Action would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

By this Amendment, Applicant has amended claims 5, 6, 8-12, 28-33, 38, 39, 41 and 42 by rewriting the claims in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 13-15 depend from claims 10-12, respectively. Similarly, claims 22-24 depend from claims 10-12, respectively, and claims 25-27 depend from claims 22-24, respectively.

Accordingly, claims 5, 6, 8-15, 22-33, 38, 39, 41 and 42 as amended are believed to be allowable, and withdrawal of the objection thereto is requested.

Claims 1-4, 7, 16-21, 34-37 and 40 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as purportedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,631,431 to Silvkoff.

Applicant has carefully considered the Examiner's comments and the cited art, and respectfully submits that independent claims 1-3 and 34-36 are patentable over the cited art, for at least the following reasons.

This application relates to facsimile communications to and/or

from a facility apparatus provided with a plurality of boxes. Conventionally, a box of the facsimile apparatus can be assigned for confidential communications by registering a corresponding F-code identification code, box name and password, for the box. When a transmission side wishes to transmit confidential information to the box, the corresponding F-code is embedded in a setup signal transmitted during the pre-transmission procedure. A user can retrieve the confidential document from the box by entering the F-code and password.

According to the present application, a user is prompted for a F-code when the user operates a facsimile apparatus for performing transmission (for example, claim 1) or for producing a polling document (for example, claim 2). The F-code entered by the user is compared with F-codes registered with corresponding boxes of the apparatus. The transmission operation or polling document producing operation is accepted only after the entered F-code is matched to a registered F-code. Identification information for the box corresponding to the matched F-code is registered as authentication information in document management information for the transmission job or polling document job.

The cited art does not disclose or suggest the claimed invention.

Silvkoff, as understood by Applicants, is directed to serial data communication bus controllers [such as compliant with the CAN (Control Area Network) bus standard] and microcontrollers incorporating the same. In particular, Silvkoff discloses a semaphore coding method to ensure data integrity in a CAN microcontroller. The microcontroller is provided with one or more message buffers. Each message buffer has an associated three-state semaphore which indicates a current status of the buffer. One state that can be indicated by the semaphore is that data is being written to the buffer. Another state is that message

data writing is complete. The third state is that message data is being read from the buffer.

Silvkoff does not purport to be directed to facsimile communications. There is not suggestion in Silvkoff to apply its teachings to facsimile communications. Indeed, Silvkoff does not mention facsimile communications at all.

Accordingly, for at least the above-stated reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that Silvkoff is not relevant to the claimed invention, and therefore independent claims 1-3 and 34-36, and the claims depending therefrom, are patentable over the cited art.

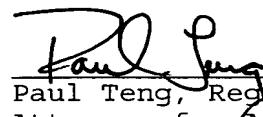
If a petition for an extension of time is required to make this response timely, this paper should be considered to be such a petition, and the Commissioner is authorized to charge the requisite fees to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

The Office is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees that may be required in connection with this amendment and to credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

If a telephone interview could advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Allowance of this application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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